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CHILE

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR MARÍA TERESA INFANTE PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE OF CHILE TO THE OPCW AT THE NINETEENTH SESSION OF
THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Ms Chairperson,
Mr Director-General,
Distinguished delegates of the States Parties and colleagues,

Ambassador Vesela Mrđen Korać, please allow me to first of all join with those who spoke before me to welcome and congratulate you on your election as Chairperson of this Conference. We are confident that under your leadership, the session of the Conference will be a success.

I would also like to recognise the capable and efficient efforts of your predecessor, Ambassador Dr Al-Ali, as well as the dedication of Ambassador Moerzinger, the Chairperson of the Executive Council, and the facilitators for their support of the Organisation's work.

This year with its successful work in progressing toward a world free of chemical weapons, the OPCW has once again proven that it earned the Nobel Peace Prize last year. These are the fruits of the collective efforts of the States Parties and the Technical Secretariat under the leadership of the Director-General.

Within this context, my delegation adheres to the statement made by the Non-Aligned Movement and China voiced this morning by the Head of the Delegation of Iran. This statement addresses important elements for moving forward with our mission.

In spite of the advances made in chemical disarmament, we ought to remain vigilant until the task has been completed, which is why we encourage possessor States to continue their efforts to overcome the obstacles that arise on their paths; we are confident that they will complete the destruction of their stockpiles in the shortest time possible as they have said.

Within this framework, we welcome the progress that has been verified in the Syrian Arab Republic's chemical disarmament programme, in a relatively short period of time and while facing challenging circumstances. Progress has been made thanks to the joint efforts of the international community, the Technical Secretariat, and the Syrian Government.

We are confident that the successful cooperation that was seen between the United Nations and the OPCW during the Joint Mission will extend into collaboration between the OPCW and UNOPS on the tasks that remain ahead. In this sense, we support the agreements that



help make the work of the Technical Secretariat conducive to moving forward with the destruction of chemical weapons facilities.

We again welcome the decision of the Director-General to nominate Ambassador Medeiros of Brazil as his Special Adviser on Syria and we are certain that he will contribute to assisting in the implementation of this Organisation's decisions on chemical disarmament in the Syrian Arab Republic.

There is an awareness of the fact that some matters remain unresolved, especially within the scope of said country's declaration regarding its chemical weapons programme; we believe there is room for a broader clarification of the facts, which will boost transparency and confidence in the process.

As for the Fact-Finding Mission concerning the alleged use of chlorine in the Syrian Arab Republic, we have voiced our concern about the results of the investigations, as well as our support for the work done by the Technical Secretariat, which continued to move forward in its efforts even after its staff members became the target of an attack while fulfilling its mandate. The hostile use of chemicals is a reprehensible act in violation of all international legal standards, particularly those set out in the Convention. We look forward to the Mission's new report. At the same time, the Mission's mandate notwithstanding, there is an obligation to identify those responsible for these deeds, regardless of who they may be, so that they may be held accountable.

This Organisation has recently had to work in circumstances that it has never before experienced and, as is always the case in a new undertaking, it has learned lessons that will allow it to improve its practices and capabilities. The recent review on this matter carried out by the Secretariat in order to address situations like the one mentioned above is a demonstration of the responsibility and professionalism that we value.

On the other hand, we believe it is critical that in the discussion of as-of-yet unresolved matters or issues that give rise to concern, objectivity, transparency, and a constructive stance—elements that have made it possible for this Organisation to move forward steadily achieving its goals—are made top priorities within the international disarmament system.

With this same constructive spirit, bearing in mind the precedents that point to possible lack of resources and experience for confronting the hostile use of chemicals in Syria, as well as the need to provide appropriate aid to the potential victims of this type of attacks—which we hope will not take place—we believe that this Organisation will be able to assist in strengthening or creating response measures, in coordination with the proper international organisation and in consultation with the Syrian authorities. This is a subject for discussion for everyone involved.

The universality of the Convention is an essential condition for achieving its purpose and will contribute to international peace and security. We know that the Technical Secretariat is working hard to meet this goal, and it is encouraging to note that one of the goals of next year's programme is to welcome a new State Party to the Convention. We hope that the signals that have been received in this area will be crowned with success.

Another of the fundamental pillars of the Convention of great importance to countries like Chile is international cooperation. The Convention serves as a foundation for advancing with

a broader exchange of scientific and technological information in the field of chemistry for non-prohibited purposes. We are convinced of the positive effects that this cooperation has, not only for the economic and technological development of all States Parties, but also as an incentive to work in a more decisive manner in the other areas of the Convention.

We recognise the work performed by the Technical Secretariat on this matter and the generous input from some States; for that reason, we believe there is room to develop new forms of cooperation and continue to explore ideas without discrimination. We can discuss these flexibly, objectively, and in a constructive spirit, based on their own merits and needs, taking the first steps based on what has already been agreed upon. Chile will continue making efforts to progress further in this area.

Another area in which Chile has been working and to which it wants to continue making a contribution is that of assistance and protection. We support the strategy of regional cycles that the Secretariat is working on in this area, while remembering the good results of the pilot project for GRULAC countries, the basic course for which was developed in our country in April 2014.

As we move forward in the chemical weapons stockpiles destruction process, the need to prioritise other objectives, such as preventing a re-emergence of chemical threats, has become evident. To this end, education and outreach aimed at promoting the goals of the Convention in the scientific and academic communities, as well as the chemical industry and civil society, are essential tools for the responsible use of chemical knowledge. In this regard, we recall the work done by the Technical Secretariat and countries such as Argentina, among others.

We also welcome the completion of the Education for Peace conference in September, as well as the initiative to name this passing year the Year of Education and Outreach. The events scheduled for next year in Ieper for the commemoration of 100 years since the first large-scale use of chemical weapons will be not only symbolic, but will also serve as a reaffirmation of our commitment to our current purposes.

Along these same lines, Germany's proposal to apply the Hippocratic oath to the field of chemistry deserves to be considered with interest, so that we may be assured that the science of chemistry will not be used for destructive purposes and that knowledge of chemical weapons production will not fall into the hands of criminals or other hostile groups. As a special manifestation of this phenomenon, the potential hostile use of toxic chemicals by non-state actors should be addressed; the OPCW may have a substantial role in line with the authorities granted it by the Convention.

I would like to note that the challenge that this Organisation has had to confront during this last period has demonstrated the advisability of having a verification team capable of handling unforeseen situations and emergencies, which is why we recommend giving the Director-General the flexibility necessary for renewing the contracts of experienced inspectors, under certain conditions, who can handle similar situations that may arise in the future, while contributing to the development of new capabilities. We support the draft decision on this matter.

We have seen the efforts of the Secretariat toward strengthening the programme and budget process, which has helped us draw up a balanced draft for next year, and which we have agreed to support.

We would be grateful, Ms Chairperson, if this statement could be considered an official document of the Conference and published on the OPCW's website.

Thank you very much.

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